



CLUSTER BOOSTER ACADEMY

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST



EUROPEAN CLUSTER
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

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Call for Expression of Interest

Cluster Booster Academy

Context

Managing a cluster requires, more than ever after the COVID-crisis, a large range of skills to ensure efficient support to European SMEs. This is why a “Cluster Booster Academy” is needed. This is a 4 days intensive series of trainings offered by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform whose objectives are to:

1. Provide learning opportunities for cluster managers to further develop their skills with regard to topics relevant to the cluster strategy, through tailor-made training sessions delivered by experts
2. Meet the needs of European cluster management teams in their daily work, in particular to have the capacity to offer innovative, highly professional and diversified services to SMEs
3. Offer cluster management teams the chance to learn from each other's experiences, discover new effective and efficient practices and tools, find inspiration for new services and business models through peer-learning
4. Provide the opportunity to cluster management teams to co-shape new European value chains and interlink the 14 industrial ecosystems through the interaction and knowledge sharing
5. Support cluster management teams and stakeholders in understanding and contributing to the European policies and programmes related to the global challenges, specifically the digital and green transitions and resilience
6. Help in developing better policy related to clusters

During these interactive, hybrid training events, participants will engage in intense learning from experts to the clusters, as well as among clusters themselves, by experiencing a variety of training methods, speeches, etc.:

1. «Frontal » lessons giving space for interaction with the trainer and among participants,
2. Teamwork sessions on case studies or practical exercises through splitting into small groups to encourage peer-learning,
3. Individual “homework” to translate into practice the learnings and debrief with the group during the feedback sessions to work together on corrective actions to be able to finish the training with a personalized roadmap so that the impact of the training can be more important and induce real changes in the management of the clusters,
4. An online forum on the ECCP for the participants/trainers and speakers of the Cluster Booster Academy to keep in continuous contact between the training sessions to encourage peer-learning,
5. Presentations and guest talks to learn from experts and anticipate trends and innovations in their industrial ecosystem to be able to drive their members in the right direction with the adequate strategic vision. When possible, these inspirational sessions could take place in a different format/place than the other sessions to facilitate the illustration of the presentations of the guest speakers or the interaction.

The Academy will involve yearly between 25 to 40 participants and be organised for 4 days in a hybrid format:

1. 2 days online events (which can be split into several sessions at different dates)
2. 2 days physical events (1 to 3 months after the 2 first days to have time to put into practice the knowledge/skills acquired into practice at home and fill a “debriefing template” to work further with the group and trainers on their own roadmap)

Objective of the call

The objective of this call for expression of interest is to offer the opportunity to universities and other education institutions, regional agencies/authorities and clusters themselves to commit to host the 2-day in-person event of the Cluster Booster Academy towards the end of February 2023.

Together with the European Commission, the European Cluster Collaboration Platform team will select locations and dates for these workshops (in discussion with the chosen venue host) based on the criteria presented below and taking into account opportunities of networking between regional stakeholders and the participants.

Who can apply (eligibility criteria)

Applications are open to any individual stakeholder or to a consortium of more than one stakeholder involved or interested in bringing together regional stakeholders and cluster managers from across Europe. Thus, this includes regional development centres, research centres, universities or else.

What is expected from the host?

The host is expected to provide and/or finance the cost of the venue (and basic technical equipment as indicated below), which should be big enough to hold a 2-day training course for up to 40 participants. Based on the training concept, this will include three rooms, two of which should be large enough to accommodate up to 20 people including individual desks and another one should have a capacity to host at least 45 people (up to 40 participants plus trainers and speakers- no individual desks needed). The catering, and other potential costs such as transportation to the venue or a reception for the speakers/moderators/organisers will be covered by the European Cluster Collaboration Platform team. Furthermore, the venue host should reach out to regional authorities, clusters, research institutions, and other potentially interesting speakers ideally with expertise in cluster organisation and its management to invite to the workshops. Their involvement will not be compensated. Finally, it is highly appreciated to inform us about any other relevant events happening around the end of February to motivate the participants to further explore other events before or after the Cluster Booster Academy.

Venue

There is no strict requirement for the choice of the venue. All options are welcome (conference hotel, university, technology park, etc.). The host should make sure that there is access for disabled attendees. Room set up (mainly for the meeting rooms) may vary and change during the day and the venue should therefore allow for flexible set-ups. The host should also provide the ECCP organising team with a map and information on the venue facilities.

Accommodation should be either within the venue (e.g. in the case of a hotel) or at least within walking/short public transport distance.

Technical Equipment

As we might have external speakers joining remotely for certain parts of the workshop, all of the three rooms must be well equipped for remote connection and streaming and have at least monitors/screens and beamer, speakers and microphones (e.g. for a conference call). This equipment will not be compensated and thus is expected to be already present in the venue rooms.

Onsite Support

The host provider is required to provide adequate onsite support both on the day before the event for necessary technical checks and rehearsals and on the day of the event with an appropriate number of technicians and stewards/hostesses to ensure a smooth participants' and speakers' management.

How can the host benefit from providing the venue?

The host is not financially compensated for providing the location – however, the Cluster Booster Academy itself offers various interesting opportunities for the venue provider. Due to the presence of up to 40 Cluster managers from all around Europe as well as certified and experienced coaches the venue provider can benefit from making valuable new contacts and participating in interesting discussions. Furthermore, we expect fruitful synergies to arise between the venue provider, its network, the workshop participants and the ECCP as well as visibility through collaborative promotion activities, before, during and after the workshops.

Hotel/Accommodation

The accommodation costs are to be borne by the participants themselves. However, the venue should be easily accessible from at least one hotel, i.e. walking distance or short public transportation ride. Support before the workshops in the form of hotel recommendations and even special rates will be appreciated.

As next section mentions, the ECCP will support the preparation of the Cluster Booster Academy itself, its content and structure as well as contacting speakers.

What is expected from the host	
Before the event	During the event
Covering of all the costs	
Engagement with the regional authorities	Event steward/hostess
Engagement with local clusters and other organisations	On-site technical support for the streaming of potential remote speakers
Engagement with local speakers/experts on, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevance of sustainability, digitalisation and resilience for clusters - Cluster organisations' business models 	On-site support for short-notice printing/technical activities

- Cluster organisations' member recruitment	
Identification, contact and arrangement of the venue	Support for participants regarding informing them about potentially interesting local events (before or after the workshops), directions, transport, etc.
Contribute identifying the best quality/price accommodations for participants and negotiate promotional rates	

Table 1 What is expected from the host

Support from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform will support in facilitating the organisation of the event, its content and structure. The ECCP will elaborate the material for the promotion (before, during and after) to be used in the communication channels of the platform itself, by the European Commission and by any other relevant national or local stakeholder.

Support provided by the ECCP	
Before the event	During the event
Revision, consistency, and management of all the working documents	Coordination of all the relevant tasks
Promotion via the ECCP, the European Commission and other relevant channels	Support with speakers' presentations and documents they might want to provide (this includes the speakers provided by the venue host)
Proposing and contacting speakers/experts/moderators (outside of the venue host's network)	Coordination of all the relevant tasks
Registration of the participants (form, data collection...)	Promotion via the ECCP, the European Commission and other relevant channels
ECCP mailbox to send information for the people registered	Teams account for the potential streaming of speakers. Setting the link
Costs of travel and accommodation of speakers	Catering for participants, trainers, speakers incl. coffee breaks
Information about previous experience	
Contact and feedback from the European Commission	
Distribution of information prior the event (agenda, participants booklet and input paper)	
Contacting with stakeholders, institutions...	

Table 2 Support provided by the ECCP

Assessment process

The European Cluster Collaboration Platform, with the approval of the European Commission and the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA), will select the host according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Criteria description	Assigned weighting
1	Quality of the proposal and level of details	20%
2	Capacity to host the physical event	30%
3	Proposition of suitable regional stakeholders to invite as speakers	20%
4	Support offered by the host organisation (i.e. venue, technical equipment), including support going beyond the minimum requested.	10%
5	Accessibility and availability of appropriate accommodations	10%
6	Other aspects, offers and/or suggestion that the region would like to highlight to strengthen its application	10%

Procedure for submission of expression of interest

Expressions of interest must be submitted duly completed, following the instructions given on the ECCP website until **September 16, 2022 18:00 CEST**.

Applications must be completed in English.

Only fully filled in and timely submitted applications will be assessed.

This Call is an invitation for an Expression of Interest only. It is not an offer, and the submission of an Expression of Interest does not create a contract or agreement of any kind between the European Commission nor the European Cluster Collaboration Platform and the entity expressing the interest to host 2 days of the Cluster Booster Academy event.

Contact: In case of any questions on this Call for Expression of Interest, please refer to events@clustercollaboration.eu

ANNEX I: APPLICATION FORM

You are requested to fill this application online [here](#)

This form must be filled in all sections.

All the information must be provided in English, including the additional documentation.